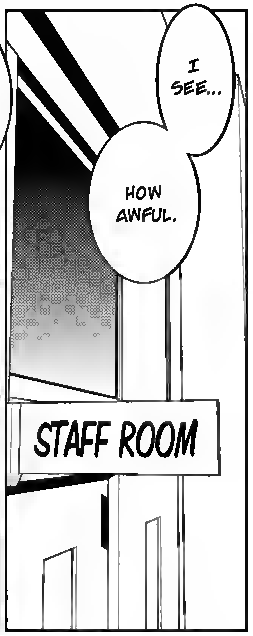
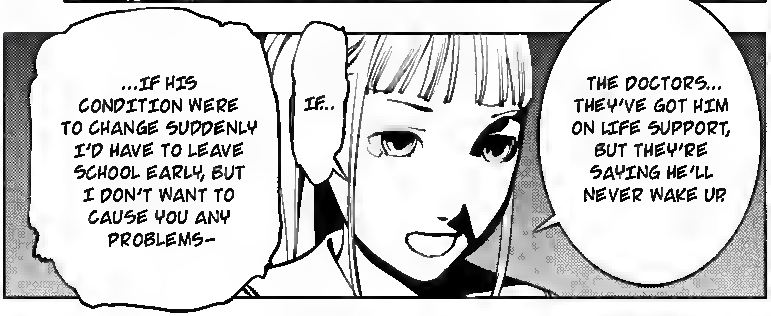
CHAPTER 3: TSUSUMI TOSHIAKI (PART 1)

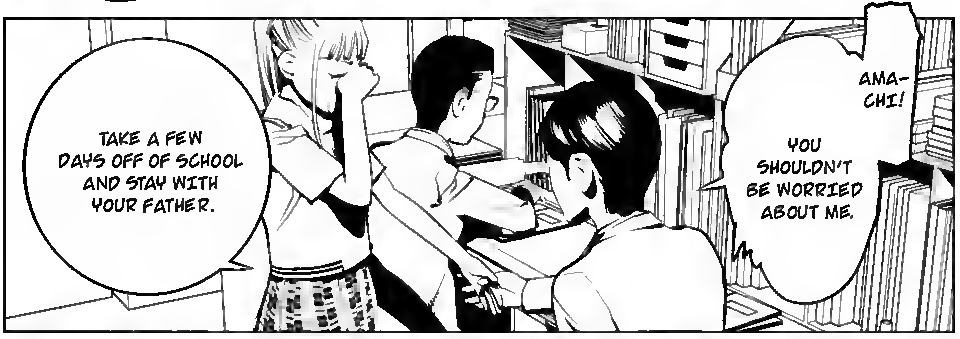
ME!
ME ME ME!
DON'T SOUND SO PROUD.
ARE THERE ANY QU-
I WASN'T PAYING ATTENTION AT ALL.
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT AT THE START OF CLASS...
WHAT?!

GULP
WELL?
WH-
WHAT-
HEEEEEE!
W-WELL...
WHEN TWO PEOPLE BECOME ONE, IT-
AAAAH!
OOOO-!!
HE SAID IT!
DONG
DING
AMACHI...
SENSEI...
UMM...
CLASS IS OVER!
REVIEW EVERYTHING THOROUGHLY!
SHEESH

HOW IS YOUR FATHER NOW?
BAD...
HE HASN'T REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS SINCE THEY ADMITTED HIM TO CENTRAL HOSPITAL.


I SEE...
HOW AWFUL.
STAFF ROOM

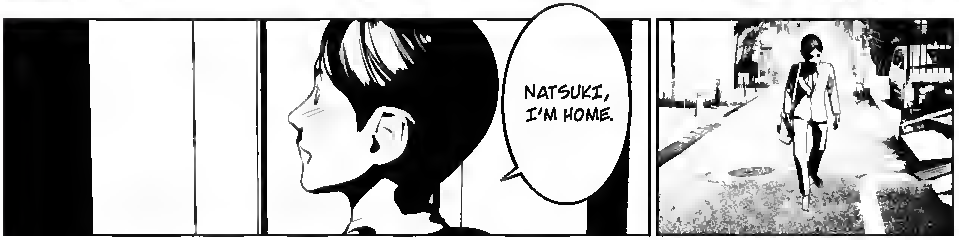

THE DOCTORS... THEY'VE GOT HIM ON LIFE SUPPORT, BUT THEY'RE SAYING HE'LL NEVER WAKE UP
IF...
...IF HIS CONDITION WERE TO CHANGE SUDDENLY I'D HAVE TO LEAVE SCHOOL EARLY, BUT I DON'T WANT TO CAUSE YOU ANY PROBLEMS-

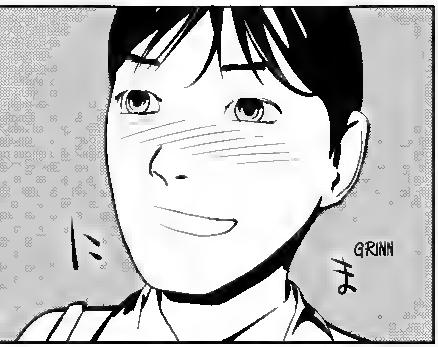

AMA-CHI!
YOU SHOULDN'T BE WORRIED ABOUT ME.
TAKE A FEW DAYS OFF OF SCHOOL AND STAY WITH YOUR FATHER.

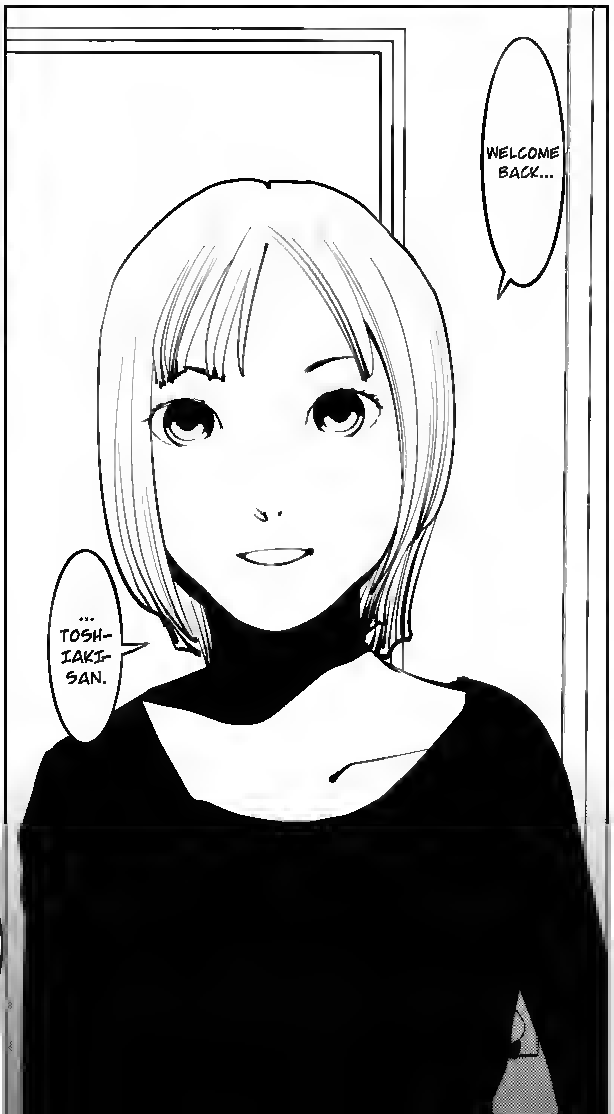
...AT TIMES LIKE THIS, WE TEACHERS...
...CAN'T REALLY DO MUCH FOR OUR STUDENTS...

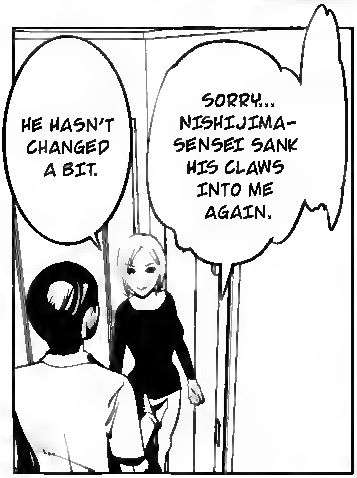
YOU'VE GOT IT ROUGH, TSUTSUMI-SENSEI.
NISHI-JIMA-SENSEI ...

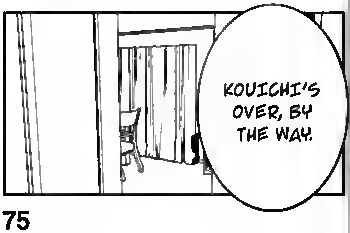
THAT'S IT?
SAME?
WHAT DO YOU EXPECT? YOU ASK ME EVERY DAY.
AH...
..SAME AS EVER.
BY THE WAY...
...HOW IS TACHIBANA-SENSEI?
NISHIJIMA-SENSEI'S AT IT AGAIN.
YOU HAVE A DUTY TO TELL ME HOW SHE IS!
YOU STOLE THAT JOY FROM MY LIFE!
LISTEN...
ONE OF THE ONLY THINGS I LOOKED FORWARD TO WAS COMING HERE AND SEEING HER FACE.
NO, NO EXCUSES!
I DEMAND AN EXPLA-NATION!
WE'RE GOING OUT DRINKING TONIGHT!
ERR...
EXCUSE ME-
WHY, TSUTSUMI-SENSEI?!
WHY?!
.. AND YOU SNAGGED A BEAUTY LIKE TACHIBANA-SENSEI!
YOUR STUDENTS ADORE YOU..

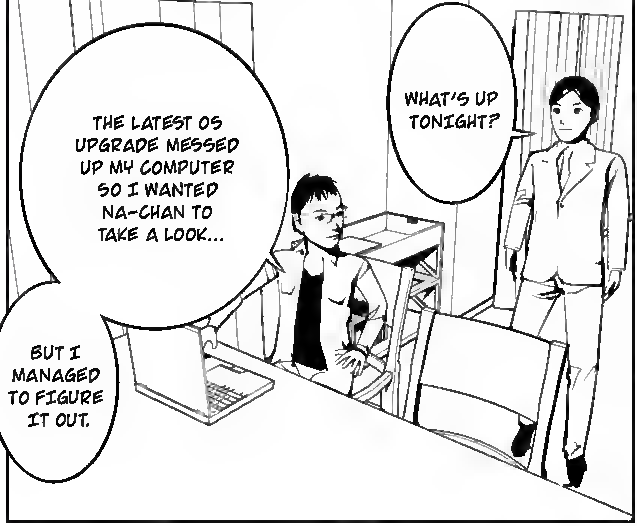

NATSUKI, I'M HOME.


GRINN

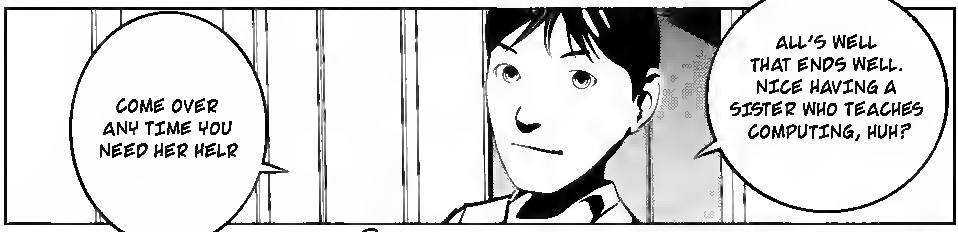

WELCOME BACK...
... TOSH-IAKI-SAN.

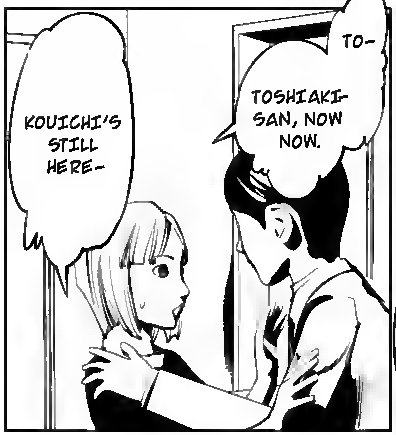

HE HASN'T CHANGED A BIT.
SORRY.. NISHIJIMA-SENSEI SANK HIS CLAWS INTO ME AGAIN.

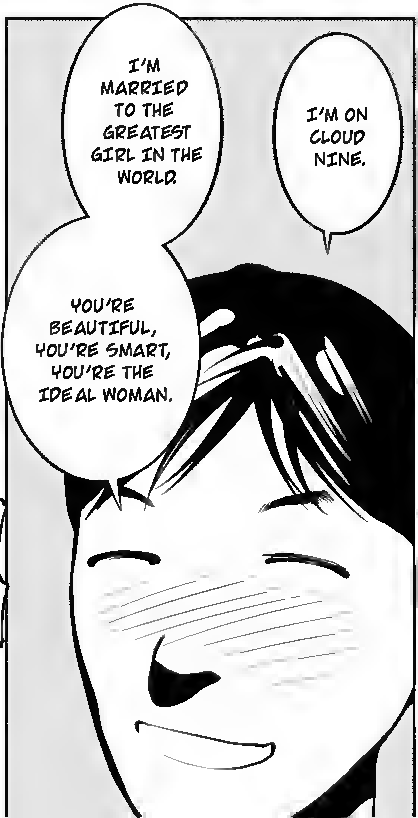

KOUICHI'S OVER, BY THE WAY.

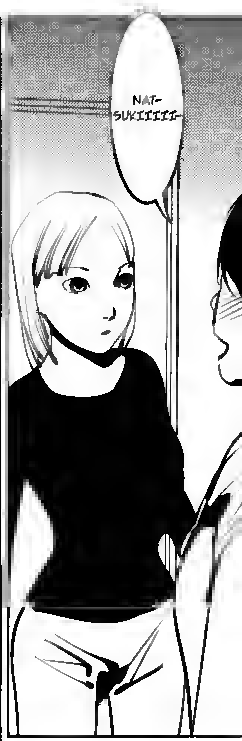

THE LATEST OS UPGRADE MESSED UP MY COMPUTER SO I WANTED NA-CHAN TO TAKE A LOOK...
WHAT'S UP TONIGHT?
BUT I MANAGED TO FIGURE IT OUT.

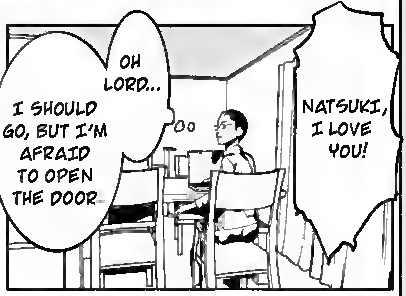
KOUICHI-KUN!
SORRY I HAVE TO BE THAT ONE IN-LAW WHO'S ALWAYS OVER.

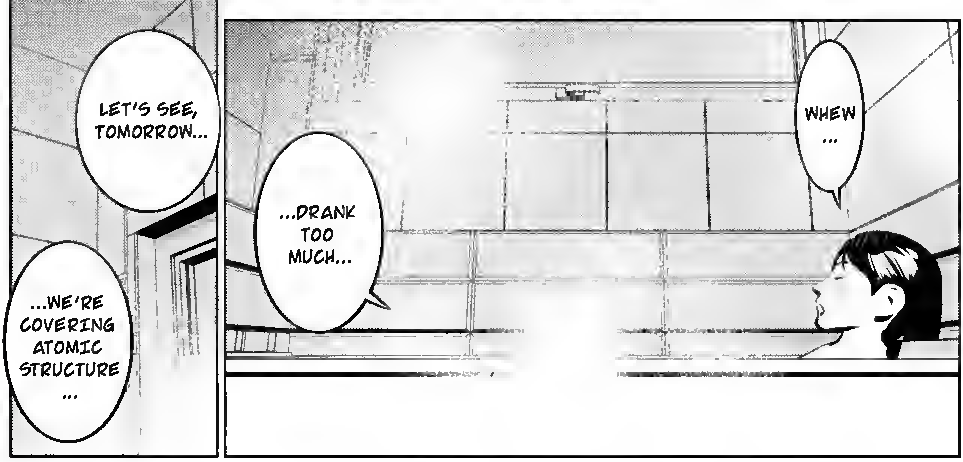

COME OVER ANY TIME YOU NEED HER HELP
ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL. NICE HAVING A SISTER WHO TEACHES COMPUTING, HUH?

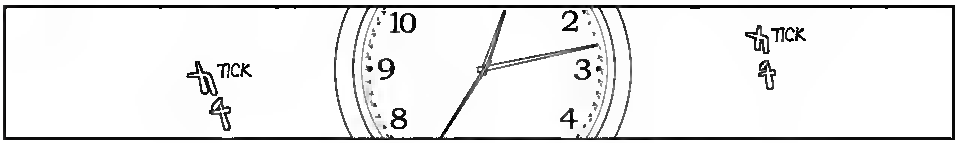

KOUICHI'S STILL HERE-
TO-
TOSHIAKI-SAN, NOW NOW.

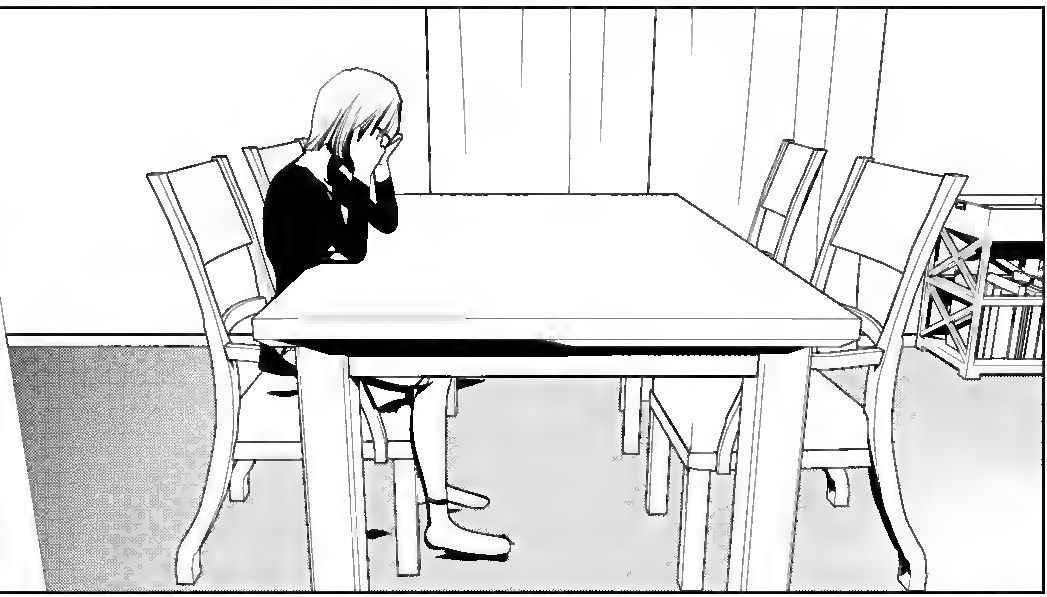

I'M MARRIED TO THE GREATEST GIRL IN THE WORLD
I'M ON CLOUD NINE.
YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL, YOU'RE SMART, YOU'RE THE IDEAL WOMAN.


NAT-SUKIIIII-

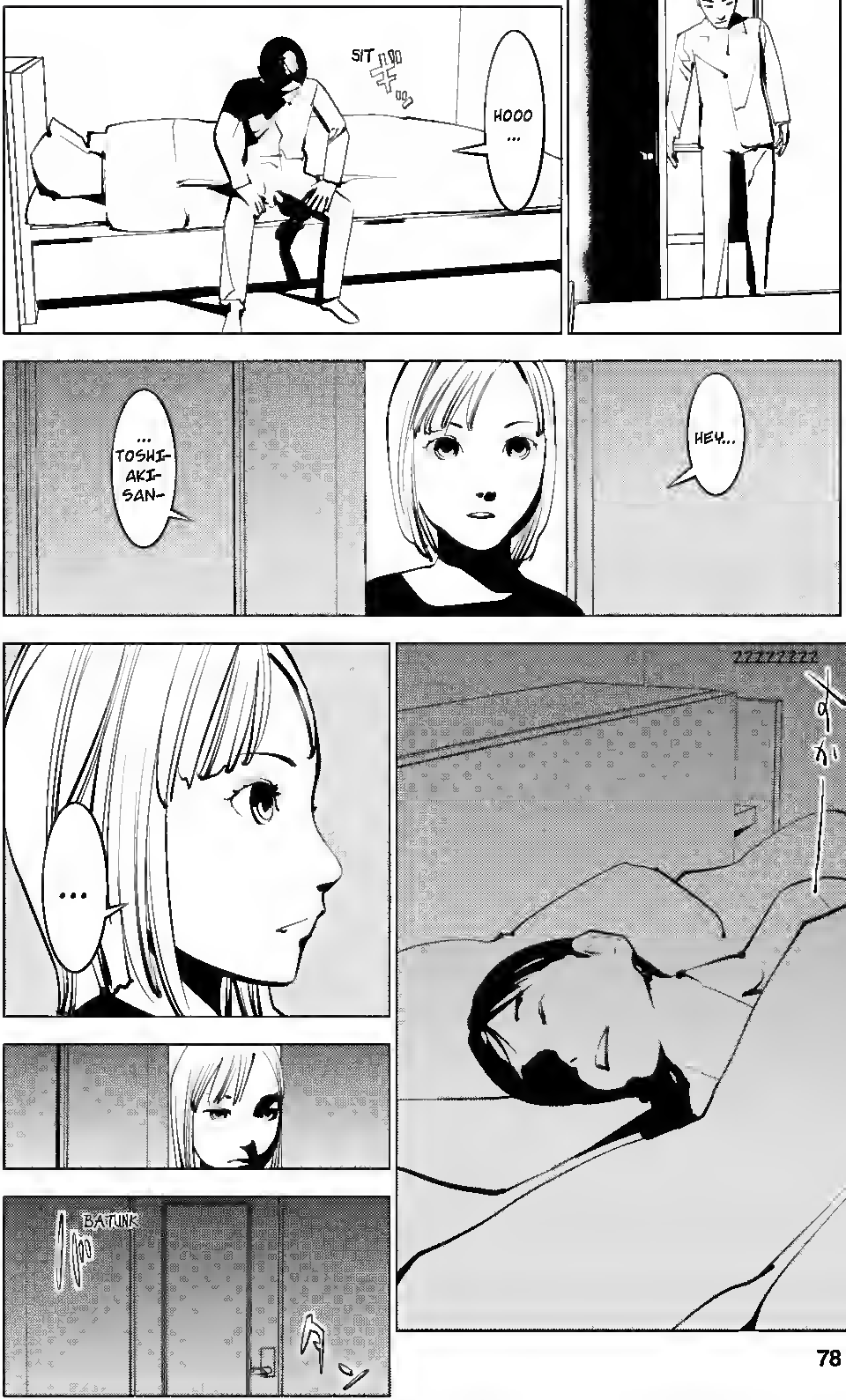

OH LORD...
I SHOULD GO, BUT I'M AFRAID TO OPEN THE DOOR.
NATSUKI, I LOVE YOU!


LET'S SEE, TOMORROW...
...WE'RE COVERING ATOMIC STRUCTURE ...
...DRANK TOO MUCH...
WHEW ...


TICK
TICK

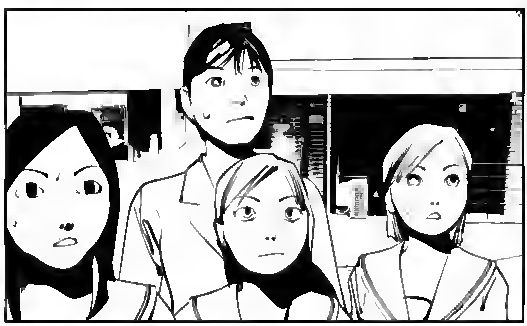


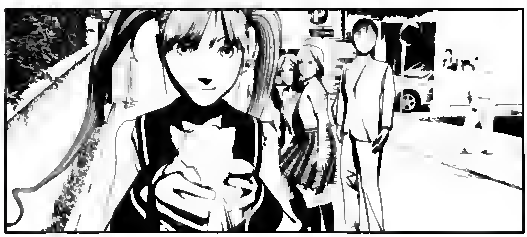
TICK


SIT
HOOO ...
...TOSHI-AKI-SAN-
HEY...
...
BATUNK

GOOD MORNING, SENSEI.
MORNING.
MURMUR
MURMUR
WHAT'RE YOU ALL UP TO?
IS SOME-THING-
!
AWW...
...POOR THING..
...MUST'VE BEEN HIT BY A CAR.
SENSEI
IS..
..THAT THE CAT WITH THE MOUSTACHE?
YEAH...
HE WAS REALLY FRIENDLY, WE ALL LIKED HIM.
POOR LITTLE KITTY..

EEEEEK!





THE BRIEF GIFT OF LIFE CUT SHORT BY A STRANGER.
WHAT A SHAME.

ARE YOU THAT CAT'S OWNER?
WE ALL THOUGHT IT WAS A STRAY...
NO.
I'M NOT HIS OWNER.
HEY!
HEY, YOU!
I JUST...
...HAVE A KEEN INTEREST IN CORPSES.
SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH HER.
SHE DOESN'T GO TO OUR SCHOOL...
AND THAT OUTFIT LOOKS LIKE A COSPLAY.
HUMAN OR NOT...
..YOU CAN LEARN A LOT FROM JUST ONE CORPSE.

TODAY WE PICK BACK UP WITH ATOMIC STRUCTURE AND THE PERIODIC TABLE.
FOLLOW ALONG ON YOUR PCS.
EVERYONE GOT THEIR COMPUTERS UP?
YOKO-TA...
NO OPENING UP ANY DIRTY WEBSITES IN THE BACKGROUND-
I'M NOT GONNA-!
SLIDE
LET'S BEGIN-
NISHIJIMA-SENSEI?
TSUTSUMI-SENSEI!
YOUR BROTHER-IN-LAW CALLED-
COME WITH ME!

HELLO? IT'S ME.
KOUICHI-KUN? WHAT'S-
...!
TSUTSUMI-SENSEI?!
HOSPITAL
病院
DASH
SLAM

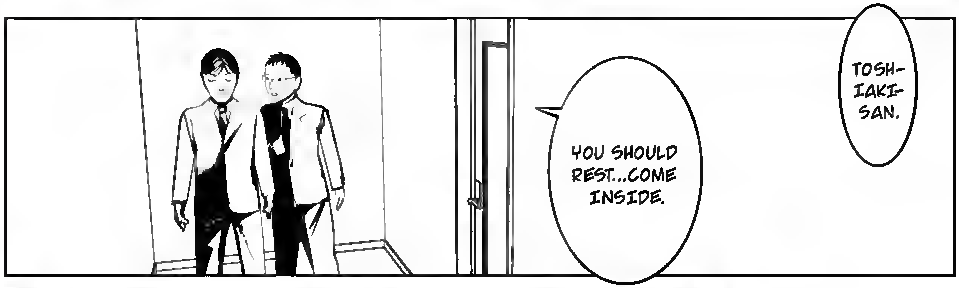
I...LEFT MY REPORT AT YOUR PLACE LAST NIGHT..
..SO I WENT OVER TO PICK IT UP..
AND ...
WAVER
SHE-
SH-
SHE WAS UNCON-SCIOUS-
I CALLED AN AMBULANCE, BUT...
..SHE HIT HER HEAD..
THEY...
THE POLICE SAID IT LOOKED LIKE SHE FELL DOWN THE STAIRS...

NATSUKI!

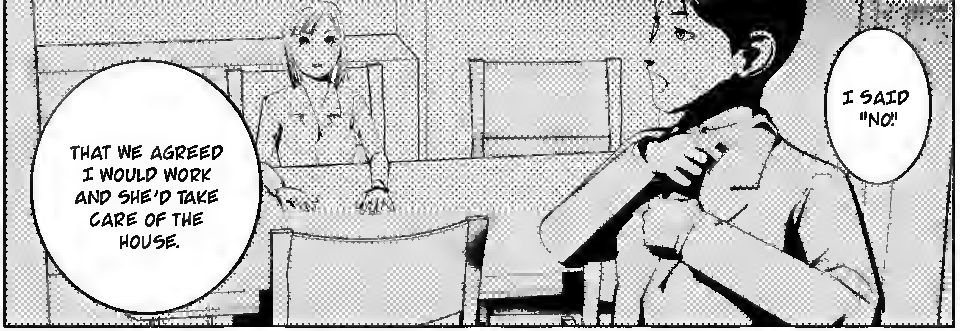
OH...
..THANK YOU...
SENSEI
IF THERE'S ANYTHING WE CAN DO, ANYTHING AT ALL...
GIRLS...
SENSEI!
SENSEI!

...NATSUKI FELL FROM UP HERE...
SO...

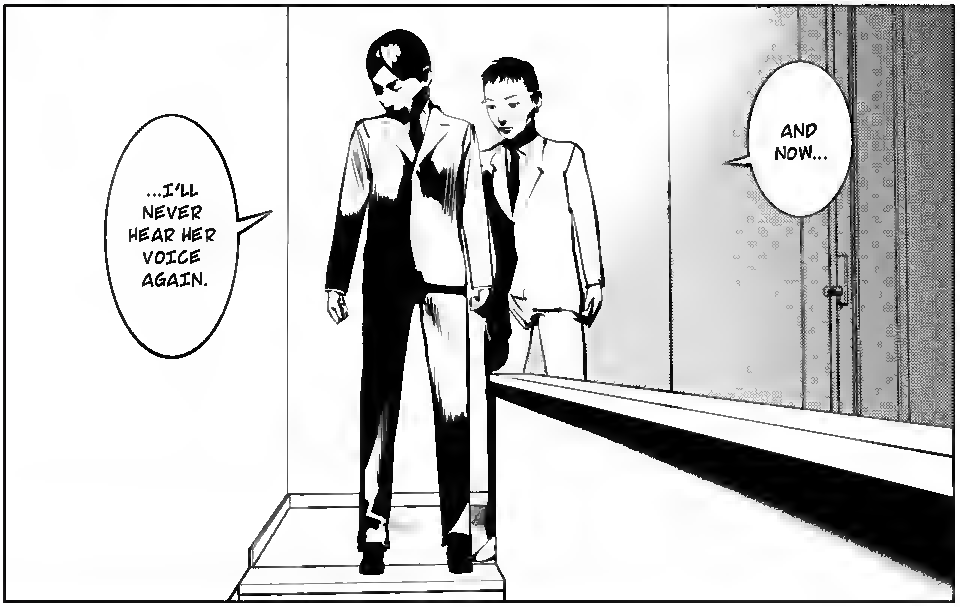
JUST GOING ABOUT HER NORMAL DAILY ROUTINE, AND WITH ONE LITTLE SLIP..
..THE LONG LIFE SHE SHOULD'VE HAD IS JUST GONE.
HOW DOES THAT EVEN HAPPEN?
NAT-SUKI ...
...PROBABLY DOESN'T EVEN REALIZE SHE'S DEAD.


TOSH-IAKI-SAN.
YOU SHOULD REST...COME INSIDE.

THAT MORNING
...NATSUKI TOLD ME...
...SHE WANTED TO GO BACK TO WORK AT THE HIGH SCHOOL...
TO TEACH COMMUNI-CATIONS

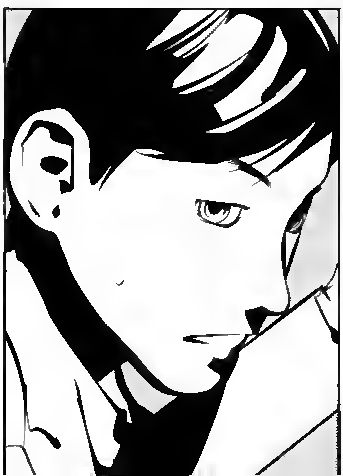

I SAID "NO!"
THAT WE AGREED I WOULD WORK AND SHE'D TAKE CARE OF THE HOUSE.

..."I'M LATE FOR WORK, WE CAN TALK LATER!"
THE LAST THING I SAID TO HER WAS..
SHE PROBABLY HAD A LOT OF THINGS ON HER MIND SHE WANTED TO TALK ABOUT.
IT TURNED INTO A BIG FIGHT.


...I'LL NEVER HEAR HER VOICE AGAIN.
AND NOW...

焼肉

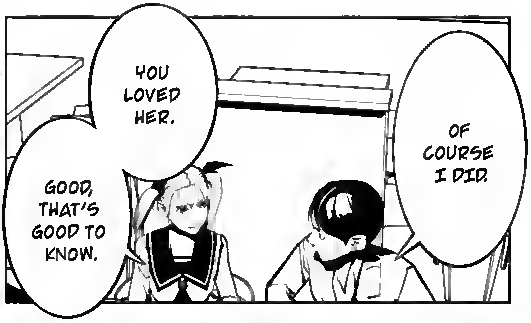
SLAM

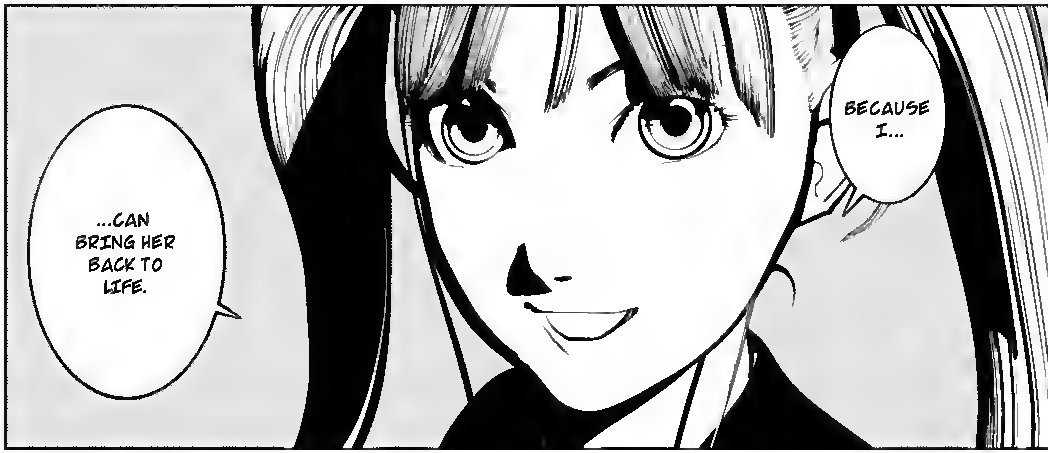


TSUTSUMI-SENSEI
THERE'S NO BETTER DISTRACTION DURING TIMES OF SADNESS THAN ALCOHOL, HUH?

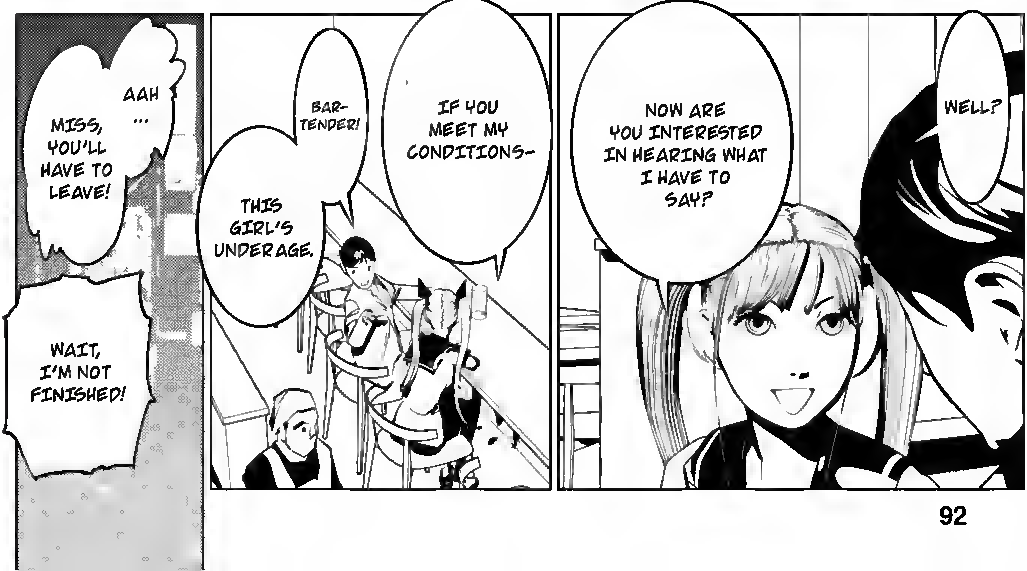
MY NAME'S MIKUNI MAYA.
YOU...
..YOU WERE...
SIT.
EASY ...
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN BEING PROPOSITIONED-
QUESTION!
BA-DING
WHAT...
TONIGHT I'VE GOT A WONDERFUL SPECIAL OFFER FOR YOU.
DID YOU TRULY LOVE...
..YOUR LATE WIFE?

TSUTSUMI-SENSEI
YOU'RE EXTREMELY LUCKY.


YOU LOVED HER.
OF COURSE I DID.
GOOD, THAT'S GOOD TO KNOW.

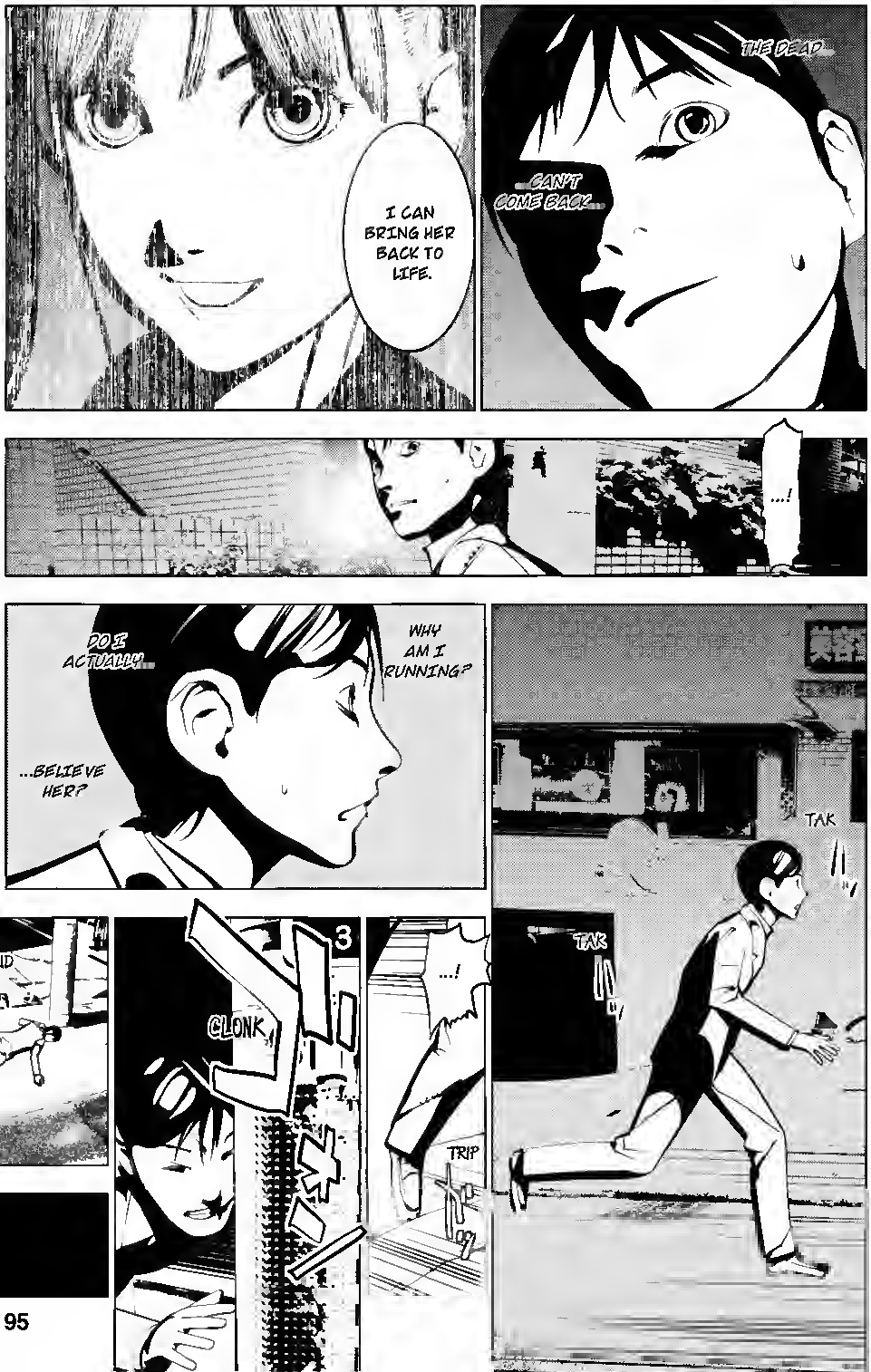

BECAUSE I...
...CAN BRING HER BACK TO LIFE.

...!


AAH ...
MISS, YOU'LL HAVE TO LEAVE!
WAIT, I'M NOT FINISHED!
BAR-TENDER!
IF YOU MEET MY CONDITIONS-
THIS GIRL'S UNDERAGE.
NOW ARE YOU INTERESTED IN HEARING WHAT I HAVE TO SAY?
WELL?

REVIVE NATSUKI?
SHE SAID SHE LIKED CORPSES, SHE MUST BE MESSED UP.
THAT LITTLE BITCH.
URK
IF YOU REALLY COULD
TO
HUN GH-
ECK-
!
SPLUSH

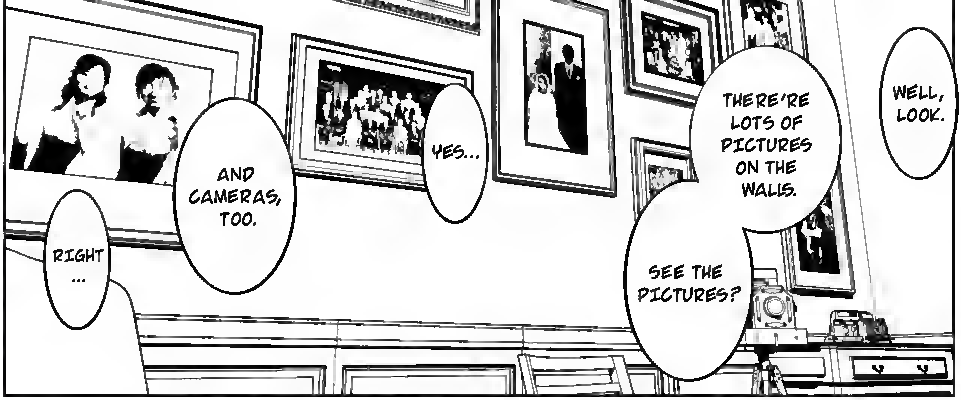
MEEEEW
RUB
RUB
NO...
...IMPOSSIBLE...
...I'M JUST REALLY DRUNK...
...IT MUST JUST LOOK LIKE THE OTHER ONE...
THAT CAT!
THE ONE WITH THE HITLER MOUSTACHE!
BUT I THOUGHT IT WAS DEAD...

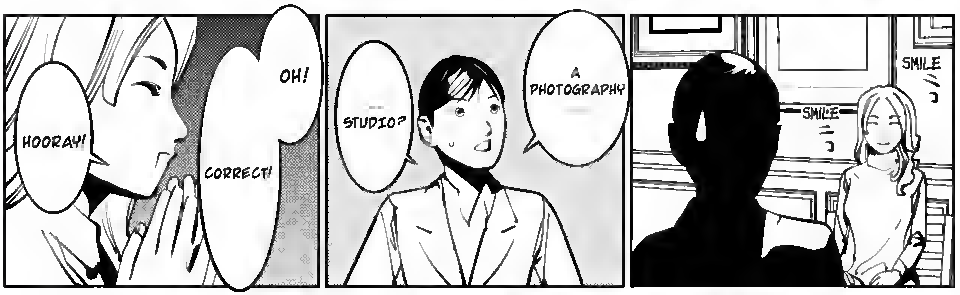

I CAN BRING HER BACK TO LIFE.
THE DEAD...
...CAN'T COME BACK...
...!
WHY AM I RUNNING?
DO I ACTUALLY...
...BELIEVE HER?
TAK
TAK
...!
TRIP
3
CLONK
WHUD

WHAT A LOSER...
..YOU START RUNNING AT FULL SPEED WHILE STINKING DRUNK...
AND KNOCK YOURSELF OUT ON A LIGHT POST.
ON YOUR FEET.
I'VE GOT ENOUGH WORK BACK AT THE STATION AS IT IS.
TSUKI...
...BRING BACK NATSUKI...

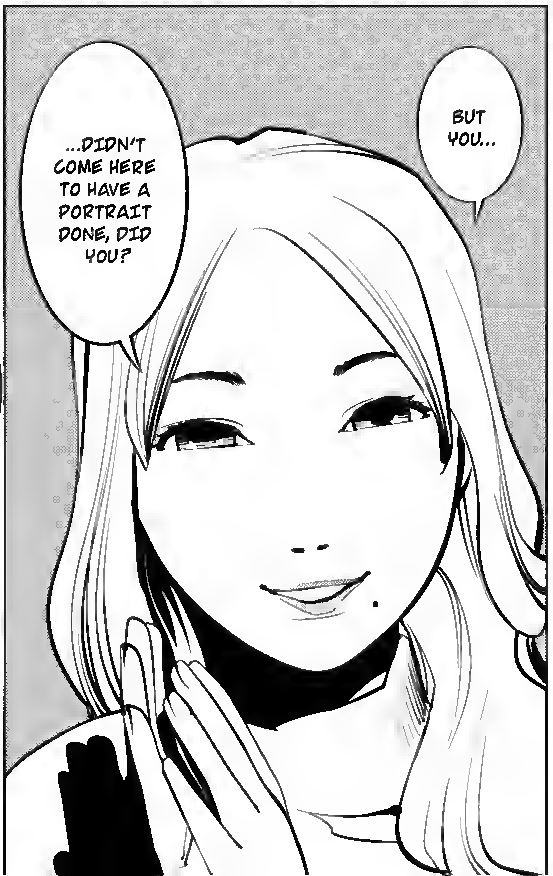
UGH...
...PATHETIC.

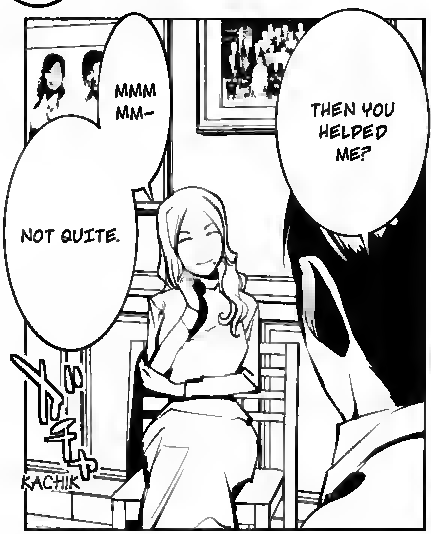
YOU'RE AWAKE?
WHERE...
...AM I?
HUH?
FEELING OKAY?
YOUR HEAD MUST HURT.
YOU REALLY HIT THAT POLE HARD.
OWW...
WHAT THE HELL...
TEE HEE.
DRINK SOME WATER AND TRY TO SETTLE DOWN.
UMM ...
WHERE AM I?

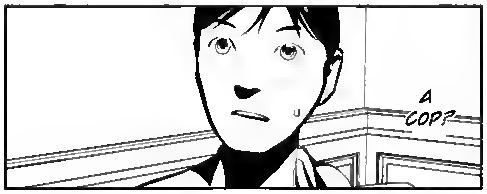

WELL, LOOK.
THERE'RE LOTS OF PICTURES ON THE WALLS.
SEE THE PICTURES?
YES...
AND CAMERAS, TOO.
RIGHT...

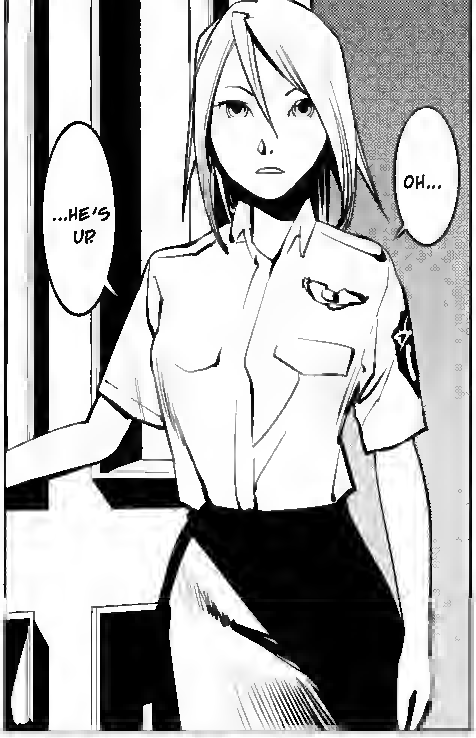

OH!
CORRECT!
HOORAY!
A PHOTOGRAPHY
STUDIO?
SMILE
SMILE

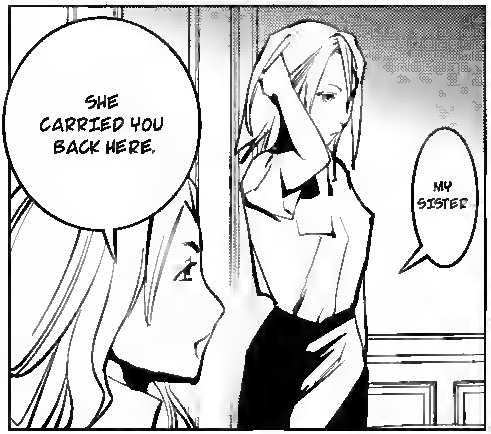
...
OH!
I WAS DRUNK, AND I FELL...


BUT YOU...
...DIDN'T COME HERE TO HAVE A PORTRAIT DONE, DID YOU?

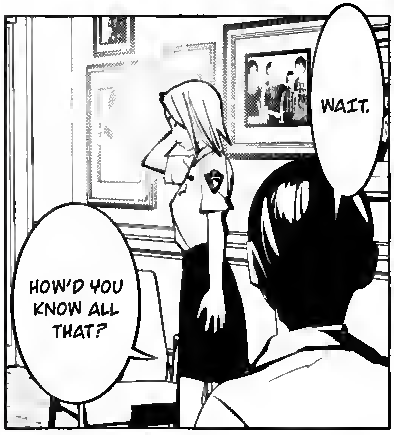

THEN YOU HELPED ME?
MMM MM-
NOT QUITE.
KACHIK


A COP?

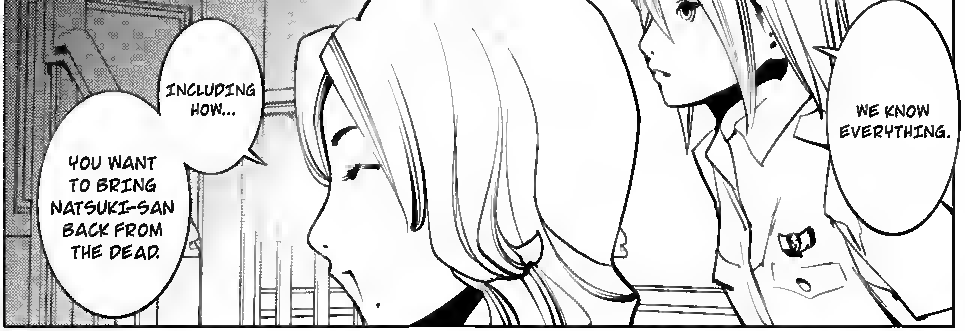

OH...
...HE'S UP

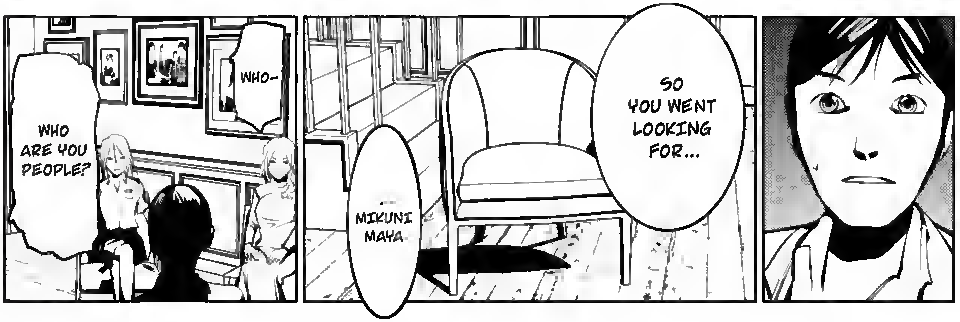

SHE CARRIED YOU BACK HERE.
MY SISTER

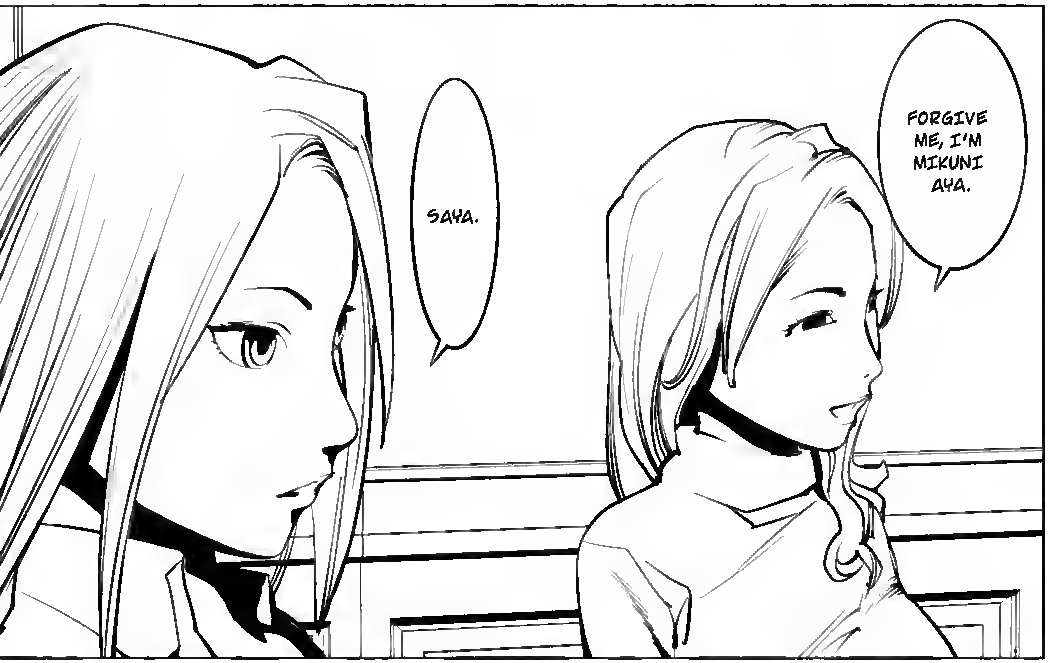
I'M...
..TERRIBLY SORRY-


WAIT.
HOW'D YOU KNOW ALL THAT?

HEY PAL.
THERE'S DESPICABLE, AND THEN THERE'S YOU.
I KNOW YOU'RE BROKEN UP ABOUT YOUR WIFE AND ALL...
BUT YOU CALL YOURSELF A TEACHER? WHAT A JOKE.
AN UNFUNNY ONE, TOO.


WE KNOW EVERYTHING.
INCLUDING HOW...
YOU WANT TO BRING NATSUKI-SAN BACK FROM THE DEAD.

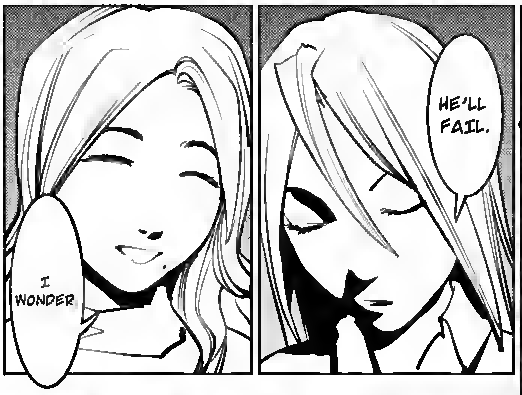

WHO-
WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE?
SO YOU WENT LOOKING FOR...
MIKUNI MAYA


FORGIVE ME, I'M MIKUNI AYA.
SAYA.

MAYA IS OUR...
... LITTLE SISTER.

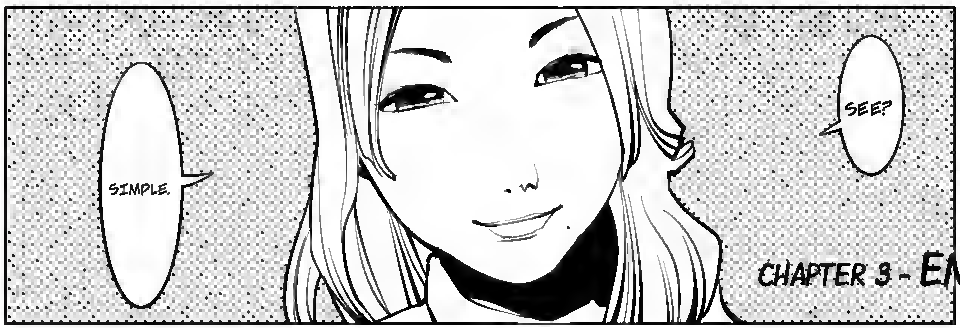
...
YOU NEED ONLY PERFORM A FEW TASKS FOR US.
VERY SIMPLE ONES AT THAT.
THE THREE OF US REALLY CAN REVIVE YOUR LATE WIFE.
..YOU MEAN IT?
YOU ...
I'D-
I'D DO ANYTHING TO GET NATSUKI BACK!
PLEASE, PLEASE!
THEN AGAIN, HE'S ABOUT WHAT I'D EXPECT OF ONE OF MAYA'S FINDS.
IT'S TOO MUCH WORK FOR THIS BUFFOON.
I BET HE FAILS.

GOOD EVENING, SENSEI.
I'M HONORED YOU CAME TO VISIT ME AT HOME.
...!
YOU'D DO "ANYTHING"
I ACCEPT.


I WONDER
HE'LL FAIL.

NAME IT!
TELL ME WHAT YOU WANT!
WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?

FOR YOUR END OF THE BARGAIN...



CHAPTER 3 - END